

Minutes of the February 25, 2003 meeting of the Oregon Coast SubPanel Meeting, Corvallis, Oregon

Attendance. *TRT Members:* Tom Nickelson (ODFW), Chuck Huntington (Clearwater Consulting), Pete Lawson (NMFS, NWFSC), Tommy Williams (NMFS, SWFSC), Tom Wainwright (NMFS, NWFSC); *Staff:* Heather Stout (NMFS, NWFSC), Rosemary Furfey (NMFS, NWR), Bridgette Lohrman (OSU, CIMRS); *Observer:* Paul Engelmeyer (Audubon Society)

The meeting convened at 10:30 am.

1. **Introductions.** All members and staff were introduced.
2. **Review of Minutes (Stout).** Minutes of the 14 November meeting were approved with no corrections. Action Item: Approved minutes will be posted on the NWFSC Oregon Coastal Coho Website.
3. **SONCC SubPanel Update (Williams).** The SONCC group is planning a March (March 18 in Arcata, California) meeting to take a first crack at population structure for the SONCC coho ESU. They will be looking for simple, transparent, geography-based rules for delineating populations. They will also identify a set of information needs. We examined a map of potential populations in the Oregon portion of the SONCC based on an ODFW report (Kostow et. al. 1995); there was general opinion that this report split populations at too fine a scale for our purposes. We briefly considered the “VSP Real World” report from the TRT chairs to the Recovery Science Review Panel, particularly regarding the issue of “populations” in small coastal tributaries.

A suggestion was made to prepare a similar map of the Oregon coast ESU identifying the Kostow et al. populations. There was also discussion of major habitat blockages on the Oregon coast (few noted) and loss of lowland habitats.

Action item: Chuck offered to prepare a map of the Kostow et al. populations based on 6th-field Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) boundaries, but was unsure how closely the populations followed these boundaries. TRT Members should read the “Real World Guidelines” and be ready to incorporate them into the population discussion at the next meeting.
4. **Spawner Abundance and Predictions (Lawson/Nickelson).** Recent and predicted coho salmon marine survivals were reviewed, comparing various methods. Recent spawner abundance data were also reviewed. Tom Nickelson presented an analysis of recolonization of previously empty habitat based on the 1998/2001 and 1999/2002 spawner surveys which concluded that the percentage of spawners that were found in previously unoccupied sites was 11% in 2001 and 8% in 2002; this statistic could be interpreted as a minimum within-basin migration rate. Total occupancy of surveyed areas was 87% in 2002, compared with 62% in 1999. Tom N. also presented results of the 4-year Smith River coho survey calibration study, which found that mark-recapture estimates of abundance were 1.48 times the spawner-survey estimates, suggesting that spawner surveys underestimate total spawner abundance. ODFW plans to repeat the study in the Nehalem basin next year.

5. Public Comment. Paul Engelmeyer made several suggestions to the Team:

- a) Watershed Councils—they need direction from the TRT regarding what conservation activities should be going on now, before the recovery plan is completed; TRT should also review watershed council action plans.
- b) The Essential Fish Habitat report should be reviewed by the TRT.
- c) Coastal zone lakes are a stronghold for coastal coho, and need early assessment, particularly regarding proposed water withdrawals and terminal fisheries.
- d) Big coho years are not simply driven by marine survival; there have been amazing egg-fry survivals recently as well.

6. Public Outreach (Stout/Furfey/Lohrman). Rosemary presented a draft public outreach plan for the Oregon coastal coho recovery process. The plan is similar to activities that have been going on in other recovery domains (such as Puget Sound). The issue of a public access website for the TRT was discussed. Bridgette is developing a watershed council needs assessment as part of her master's degree work. Heather presented ideas for a coastal research and monitoring survey, similar to the California survey conducted by SWFSC. It appears that ODFW is already collecting this data, and it is available in the NMFS NWR “4d” database.

Action items: Heather will check on access to the NWFSC salmon recovery website; Heather will contact the NWR about accessing this database; Rosemary will draft a “dear interested parties” letter introducing the recovery process to coastal constituents, to be available for review next meeting; Bridgette will have a draft of her needs assessment survey for review next meeting; Rosemary and Heather will work on a PowerPoint presentation overview of the recovery process and Oregon Coast TRT work.

7. Biological Review Team Update (Wainwright/Lawson). As part of the NMFS process to update and re-evaluate status of all listed Pacific salmon ESUs, the NMFS Northwest and Southwest Science Centers held a Biological Review Team (BRT) meeting in January, covering all listed ESUs. The co-manager draft of their report was released today, and the Oregon coastal coho section of that report was distributed to the TRT for their review and comments.

8. Task Reports

- a) CLAMS (Lawson)--Pete has been working with Gordie Reeves (USFS) (CLAMS) and others to re-establish funding for a landscape-based coho population model, linking CLAMS data and projections with a revised version of the Nickelson-Lawson coho model. This model should be very helpful in recovery action planning.
- b) Coded Wire Tag (CWT) Ocean Distributions (Lawson)--Because of harvest restrictions, there is no new useful information on ocean recoveries of CWTs. A student of Ian Fleming is conducting a study of differential jacking rates based on CWT data. However, initial analysis has not proved very enlightening.

- c) Hatchery Update (Wainwright)--There have been no new stock transfers affecting Oregon coastal coho since the 1997 status review; new release and recovery data is available.
 - d) Genetics update (Wainwright)--According to David Teel, NMFS is no longer doing allozyme studies of coho salmon, except on some ocean recoveries. All new work will be DNA-based. There is a current project to examine DNA patterns from scales collected from several areas; initial results will be available this spring. We will invite David Teel to present results at our June meeting.
 - e) GIS--Ecological Issues (Huntington)--Chuck prepared several maps of the coast, summarizing coho salmon distribution, ecoregions (levels 3 & 4), average precipitation, mean annual flow, monthly variation in flow, number of annual peaks in flow, timing of peak flow, and duration of high flows.
 - f) Other Environmental Summaries (Stout)--Heather presented data summaries from the "Oregon Atlas" (Univ. of Oregon Press, CD-ROM), including mean streamflow, bedrock type, monthly precipitation pattern, and moisture index.
 - g) Spawn timing (Nickelson)--Tom presented spawn time distributions for several basins based on annual spawner surveys for 2001. 2001 was chosen because it had good numbers of spawners and was a fairly normal water year. The data show that marked hatchery fish tend to spawn somewhat earlier than unmarked (mostly naturally-spawned) fish, although there is considerable temporal overlap in most streams. There are some obvious differences among streams, but they appear to be mainly due to hydrologic limitations; for example, bar-bound streams have later spawning.
 - h) Smolt Migration (Nickelson)--Tom presented data comparing peak week of migration and mean length at outmigration across various streams and years. Length and week are correlated, with later migrants being larger. There is a lot of within-population variation, so the data is not very useful for separating populations; a suggestion was made that an analysis-of-variance (ANOVA) analysis of the data might help. Heather presented similar, but less detailed, information compiled for the status review.
 - i) Correlations in Population Abundance (Nickelson)--Tom also presented results of an updated study of correlations in population-abundance estimates among basins. Data used was the standard survey segments area-under-the-curve (AUC) spawner density estimates averaged for each basin. There are suggestive patterns in the correlations.

Action: Tom W. will try a more detailed version of this analysis, looking at correlations among individual survey segments rather than basin-scale aggregates. The analysis will be based on wild adults per mile, detrended to eliminate large-scale climate effects.
9. **Administrative Issues.** We set dates for the next three meetings: Wednesday April 23, Tuesday June 10, and Wednesday July 23. All will be held at the ODFW facility in Corvallis.

10. Task Items

- a. GIS graphic of Kostow et al populations (Huntington)
- b. Invitation to Leslie Schaffer to speak on 4 (d) database in April (Stout)
- c. Draft “Dear Interested Parties” letter (Furfey)
- d. Federal Register Notice? (Furfey)
- e. Draft Power Point Presentation (Stout and Furfey)
- f. Contact NWFSC regarding update of the TRT website (Stout)
- g. Draft needs assessment survey (Lohrman)
- h. Invitation to David Teel to make presentation on genetic findings in June, ask for preliminary data for lakes, Umpqua for April meeting (Lawson)
- i. TRT members read Nickelson 2001 populations paper and VSP “real world” guidelines for population determination (all)
- j. Cluster analysis in population abundance (Wainwright)
- k. GIS contract/assistance discussion with Gordie Reeves (CLAMS) (Lawson)

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm.